



Tallil Times

IN BRIEF

PERSCO/Billeting extend hours

Effective Apr. 25, PERSCO and Billeting will be open 24 hours a day until further notice.

Bedrock Central

Bedrock City Council will meet May 19, at 9 a.m., in the 407th AEG conference room.

The Bedrock Health, Morale, Safety and Welfare committee meets Tuesdays at 8 a.m., in the Chapel Annex. Infrastructure committee meeting is held Tuesdays at 2 p.m., in the 407th ECES conference room, Bldg. 630. Call 445-2237 for more information.

Signs of heat stress

Be aware of symptoms of heat injury: Nausea, vomiting, change in mental status (acting bizarre), light-headedness, dry mouth, rapid pulse, loss of balance.

In spite of the fact that the heat stress is low, it is still hot and most people are not adapted to hot climates. Protect yourself and be someone's wingman.

Use sunscreen, wear a hat and most importantly drink lots of fluids. Please note that if your skin is red, that is a first degree burn and not a precursor to a tan.

Tallil Times back issues

Every issue of the Tallil Times ever created is available to 407th Air Expeditionary Group personnel on the new shared drive at S:\407 AEG\Public\PA\Tallil Times Archive.



Photo by Senior Airman Thomas Koontz

Senior Airman Brandon "Newt" Guingrich, 407th ECES Explosive Ordnance Disposal Flight, prepares detonating cord during a submunition field disposal operation Feb. 14. The EOD flight has disposed of over 71,000 unexploded ordnance and small arms ammunition since arriving here in Jan.

EOD experts keep us safe

By Master Sgt. Terry Nelson

407th AEG Public Affairs

You hear the words almost every day over Ali Base's giant voice, "there will be a controlled detonation in 15 minutes." For 99 percent of us deployed here, those repetitious words are ignored until we here a loud boom, and then the sentiments are echoed, "Must be EOD blowing stuff up."

It's a dangerous job, but the 12 Explosive Ordnance Disposal experts assigned to Ali Base's 407th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, love it.

"We have a great job here, and we have done so much since we got here," said Senior Airman A. J. Le Beau, 407th EOD journeyman. "We have developed a great working relationship with our coalition counterparts, the Italians specifically, and we have worked together to destroy so many ordnance items."

It is their job as EOD experts to identify, render safe and dispose of explosive hazards threatening U.S. and coalition forces. This includes improvised explosive devices, vehicle-borne IED and unexploded ordnance; like projectiles, mortars and submunitions.

"Our mission is extremely important here because of the vast number of unexploded ordnance items on and around Ali Base," said Capt. Jerry Sanchez, 407th EOD flight commander.

Most of the munitions found on and around Ali Base have been here for over 14 years or more. Some munitions are Iraqi and others are coalition forces which were dropped during Desert Storm. Most of these munitions are still operational and pose at least one of these three main threats to Ali personnel and coalition forces:

See EOD, Page 6

Commander's Corner

It seems the most popular pastime with the USAF personnel at Ali Base has become checking on rotator dates and seeing when that commercial flight out of Baltimore/Washington Airport will take them home to their family and friends.

Time has gone by fast here, but it has been a full four months. Everyone here has done a remarkable job in that time, and we have absolutely met or exceeded all the expectations I had when I arrived here in January regarding that which would "make it better" at Ali Base.

We have made history with the activation of the Iraqi Squadron 23, the first post-Saddam, Iraqi Air Force Squadron, and seen our base's name change from Tallil Air Base to Ali Base, the original name when this was an Iraqi Air Force base. We were the central hub for the distribution of election materials in southern Iraq for the first free election in Iraq in decades. We have started the rehabilitation of five buildings and will complete three prior to AEF 3/4 leaving, and will have the other two occupied by AEF 5/6 in a matter of weeks.

Despite sandstorms, floods and now the searing heat, every day we have made it better. Every day we have found a way to build, fix and improve things, sometimes with solutions that didn't exist in a manual, tech order,

or Air Force Instruction. We have put down hundreds of tons of rock to mitigate the mud, hundreds of tons of asphalt and cement to get above the mud and we have assembled innumerable pieces of lumber and plywood to make our work and living areas more functional and more livable. We've kept the airport open, the aircraft flying, the vehicles driving, the information, water and electricity flowing and we have made the base a much harder target for anyone with malicious intent toward us.

Our Airmen, working in a brutal, austere environment with the threat of enemy attack at any time, have been kept safe and healthy by our Security Forces, Law Enforcement, Safety and Medical personnel, both USAF and Army.

The sum total of the above: we have kept airpower on line here at Ali Base every day in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. That is the bottom line — and you did it working as part of a world-class team in the 407th Air Expeditionary Group

Safety is now my biggest concern. I ask you all to remain focused on the mission here until the time you board that rotator home. We have a responsibility to those who are replacing us; provide them with as much continuity as you can as the mission continues as and after you depart.

I would like to personally thank everyone for the sacrifices you have made. It has been an honor and a privilege to be associated with you, the AEF 3/4 professionals at Ali Base; no finer group exists anywhere in the United States Air Force.



Colonel Dennis M. Diggett, 407th AEG commander, and Chief Master Sgt. James Lawrence, 407th AEG superintendent, present Senior Airman A.J. LeBeau, 407th ECES Explosive Ordnance Disposal flight, with the 332nd AEW Team of the Month Award for Mar. Airman LeBeau accepted the award on behalf of the 12-member EOD flight.



Colonel Dennis M. Diggett, 407th AEG commander, and Chief Master Sgt. James Lawrence, 407th AEG superintendent, present 1st Lt. Paul Cancino, 407th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron, with the 332nd AEW Company Grade Officer of the Month award for Mar.



Colonel Dennis M. Diggett, 407th AEG commander, and Chief Master Sgt. James Lawrence, 407th AEG superintendent, present Senior Airman Eric Rackard, 407th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, with the 332nd AEW Airman of the Month award for Feb.



The Tallil Times

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The *TALLIL TIMES* accepts stories, photographs and commentaries, which may be submitted to the PA staff located in the group headquarters building or can be sent directly to the newspaper at tallil.times@tlab.aorcentaf.af.mil

Deadline for publication is 2 p.m. Thursday before the week of publication. For more information, call 445-2002, or e-mail the staff.



Evolution

By Senior Master Sgt. Don Foster

407th ELRS

Some of us are veterans and some are on their first deployment. There is one thing that always rears its head regardless of experience level. Sooner or later you hear "What did that last rotation *do*? The inevitable answer is "Nothing".

Building a base on captured soil is an evolutionary process. Each rotation passes through and leaves its mark. A rotation's accomplishments may not be readily appar-

ent to the casual observer. They achieved their milestones before the new crew even arrived. Each rotation faces its own challenges. The most important task to one AEF may not get a second glance by the next. Conversely, a low priority job for one may suddenly become the most urgent need for the next. Job priorities are a moving target in the AOR.

On top of that, the military has trained us to identify and correct weak areas. That is how we built the most lethal Air Force in the world. The stakes are high. There is no second place winner in war. I'm sure we noticed improvement opportunities upon arrival. Guess what the next rotation will

immediately pick out? It will be our weak areas. They may not realize you poured your heart and soul into something for the last four months. It isn't personal. They just intend to take the base to higher levels. That is the same thing we did. I passed through here in August of 2003. The evolution between then and now is phenomenal.

Eventually, everyone becomes part of "that last rotation". The time has come for us to pass the baton to fresh faced replacements.

Hopefully, you have given everything you had to make things better. If so, the next crew should have no trouble figuring out what *you* did during your tour.

Remembering to do what is right

By Master Sgt. Evan Weiss

407th AEG First Sergeant

Doing what is right. You hear this all the time. What does it really mean? Why is it so important that you do the right thing?

As we all know, doing what is right can be subjective and can be interpreted differently by each person. So given that qualification, let me give you my take on doing what is right.

Since I was a child, I was taught to follow the rules set by my parents, teachers, managers and finally Air Force supervisors/leadership. Growing up it is difficult at times to do what is right especially if there is peer pressure not to do the right thing. Choos-

ing your friends is very important not only to ensure you do the right thing but to also succeed in life.

Friends have influences over you that dictate where you end up in life. This is especially true when you are young. Young people are easier to persuade than older people. Depending on your background, beliefs and influences, right means different things. This is why when we joined the military each of us went through indoctrination.

Once you entered the military your perception of right and wrong was adjusted by boot camp, tech school and your first duty station. If you are not able to adjust to military life, you are kicked out.

Because of the indoctrination we received when we entered the military we all have the same perception of right and wrong thus "the right thing" is no longer subjective.

Our superiors set the rules and we follow regardless if we agree with them or not. There are various avenues in which to make changes, but not following the rules is not an option.

Some examples of rules we must follow here at Ali Base are combat showers, smoking in designated areas, wearing the correct uniform when outside of Bed Rock, and looking after one another.

These rules may seem like a nuisance but they are necessary and make our lives here better.

Overseas quarterly assignment listing available soon

The Enlisted Quarterly Assignment Listing for overseas requirements for the January - March 2006 cycle will be available May 3.

Airmen need to work through their military personnel flights to update their preferences by May 20. Deployed personnel must work with their PERSCO representative to update assignment preferences.

Airmen will be notified of their se-

lection by mid-June.

EQUAL advertises upcoming assignment requirements, by Air Force Specialty Code and rank. Members are instructed to review, prioritize and update their assignment preferences based on the EQUAL list.

Airmen can view the lists on the Air Force Personnel Center Web site at <https://afas.afpc.randolph.af.mil/amsweb/master.cfm> or at the local MPF.

Shaw F-16 crashes, Airmen eject safely

An F-16D Fighting Falcon from Shaw

AFB, S.C. crashed Apr. 18 near Charleston, S.C.

At the time of the accident, the pilots, Maj. Steve Granger and Lt. Col. Maurice Salcedo, had just begun a training mission. They ejected safely into a river near Charleston and were taken to a local hospital where they were treated and released.

The pilots are attached to the 77th Fighter Squadron, and the aircraft was assigned to the 55th Fighter Squadron.

A board of officers will investigate the accident.



Notes from home for our returning warrior!

By Sheri Goad

Wife of TSgt. Richard Goad, 407th AEG/CP

I have set up the tent in the back yard and the boys assisted in emptying the sand box inside. If you have the urge to light up we have placed a metal chair in the middle of the commons area clearly 25 feet away from the tent and house.

I have invested in several hundred pounds of very ragged rocks to create a path to the bathroom. (I know how much you love wearing out your shower shoes)

I am excited to say I have gone to great lengths to prepare a welcome home feast. The guy at the Army Surplus store was particularly helpful with hints on spicing up an MRE. I was thrilled to find the commissary carried "really cheap" plastic ware! I have been experimenting and found that if I bake a cake a few degrees higher for a while longer I can cut out the whole week on the counter thing. I guess I owe that discovery to the baby, since about the time I was supposed to be taking the cake out of the oven; he decided it was time to squeeze the entire bottle of maple syrup on the kitchen floor. I have to hand it to him though; mopping it up with his brother's homework was pretty quick thinking.

Since I am sure you will be tired when you return from your long trip, I have pre-filled all the tubs and sinks. After all I don't want you to have to worry about a thing. I have also invested in several shades of drab spray paint to coat the grass. I figured a gradual transition would be best. As for the

lighting we have taped all the switches to the on position. We don't want any unnecessary stress.

We are excited about you coming home and to ease the transition for us, here are a few notes from home.

When you have made the final transition back to the house, watch your step. While you will no longer be walking on rocks, the Lego landmines tend to present a similar scenario. Be especially careful of the hot wheels, they tend to make you travel.

If at night you feel something tugging at your feet, please do not swat! If you wait a minute your tugger will soon be snuggling up asking to share your pillow and telling you how much he loves you.

The television will still tune into your favorite TV shows but you will have to view them through the images of Barney burned into the screen.

I have equipped the family with a second computer. If you would like to speak with your two older boys their email addresses are located in my address book. Once you have informed them you are in the house clear the stairs for the stampede and brace yourself so as not to be knocked to the floor.

Surround sound is a new feature in our home. Please note there is no volume control. If the sound needs adjusted simply reposition one of your children.

Live entertainment is offered at around 9 p.m. nightly. You will be able to hear the drama from any level of the house but for the best showing, seat yourself outside the boy's bathroom while they get ready for bed.

At 2:45 p.m. each afternoon be prepared for a 60 minute review of "A Day in the Life of Middle School" If you are lost at first don't worry you will quickly catch up and you will soon feel as though you know the characters in the stories as well as your own child!

If you have access to a PS2 before your return, you may want to practice to make sure your fingers are in shape. After all, you don't want to be shown up by a third grader!

My arms are used to hugging little guys so when you return you may have to give many many many many hugs so they can readjust.

Talking to myself has become a part of my everyday routine however if I am responded to by an actual person this behavior should diminish within a few weeks.

Bathroom conditions may be cramped temporarily while I readjust to sharing counter space and the towel rack. This situation should correct itself within a week.

I hope these notes from home will help you prepare for your return. We are excited and are anxiously awaiting the moment you walk through the front door. I am confident that whatever "obstacles" should arise we will be just fine. After all, together is a pretty strong thing and together in any circumstances is better than apart any day! Hurry home we miss you!

(This article is in response the Apr. 22, "Advice for families with returning Ali Base warriors" feature written by MSgt. Michael Messersmith, 407th ECES).

ESVS Presents Just for fun

Tonight, Combat Bingo,
7:30 p.m.

Saturday, Open

Sunday, 8-Ball, 8 p.m.

Monday, Ping Pong, 8 p.m.

Tuesday, Foosball, 8 p.m.

Wednesday, 9-Ball, 8 p.m.

Thursday, Dominoes, 8 p.m.

May. 6th, Combat Bingo,
7:30 p.m.

Muscle Beach Events

Today, Yoga, 5:30 a.m.;
B-Ball Playoffs, 7 and 8
p.m.

Saturday, Volleyball Cham-
pionship, 3 p.m.; B-Ball
Championship, 7 p.m.

Sunday, Open

Monday, Taebo, 5:30 a.m.

Tuesday, Tai Chi, 5:30 a.m.

Wednesday, Taebo, 5:30 a.m.

Thursday, Tai Chi, 5:30 a.m.,

May. 6th, Yoga, 5:30 a.m.,

Protect yourself against pests

By Master Sgt. Lawrence Robinson

407th ECES Pest Management Team

Spring, summer, and early fall are the busiest times of the year for pest controllers in the states. Here in the desert it is no different. With the temperature rising, the base populace will begin to notice a whole array of pests from camel spiders to the continued sighting of cats and dogs. With that in mind there are some things that you can do to ensure that you are safe and well protected against these pests.

Sanitation: Sanitation is the most important thing to protect our selves against pests. Emptying the trash on a daily basis and keeping your sleeping area free of trash (especially food) will decrease the chances of any pest establishing your area as a home. Sweeping your tents out is very important because fleas and dust mites will live in the dirt. In general, keeping a clean living and common area in the tents will reduce the chances of pests inhabiting your living area.

Policing: Policing the area outside your tent will also provide a measure of protection. All kinds of pest can live in those sand bags around our tents. Rodents have been known to establish homes (normally called burrows) in sand bags. Snakes have also been seen around the sand bags. You do not have to move the sand bags around or lift them, just walk around the tent and look at them. Make sure there are no holes in the bags and that they are in good repair. If you do see something that looks like a rodent burrow or suspect that something is living around your tent call the 407th ECES Customer Service so the Pest Management Shop can come out for an inspection.

Repellents: Using repellents will provide you protection against biting insects such as sand flies, mosquitoes and buffalo gnats (commonly known as the black valley night). Just remember to use the repellents as the label states and only use on the skin if permitted by the label. Repellents are great tools against biting insects but they will not keep the insects from landing on you. Insect repellents are designed to keep insects from biting or stinging you.



Courtesy photos

This fox was captured last year here at Ali Base. There are many stray animals running loose around base. They are not pets, these are wild animals, so stay away and call the 407th ECES Pest Management Team if you come in contact with and stray animals.

Education: Finally, please do not believe everything you hear about the pests on the base. There are several myths, legends, and stories about pests in general, but some of them are for entertainment purposes only. For example, the story of the 12 inch camel spider or the 8-foot snake (which is now 9 or 10-feet). Stories such as these are great entertainment but can cause unnecessary panic if the truth is not identified right away.

Call for assistance: We have our share of pests here at Ali and we also have a team of people to help handle these pests.

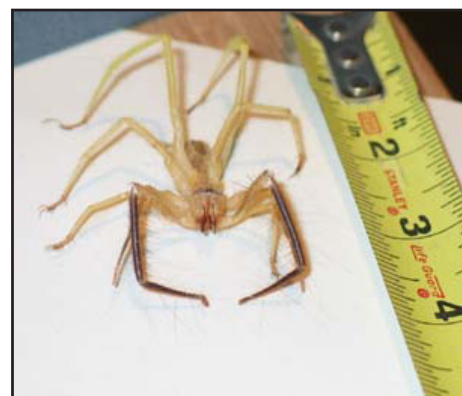
Army Preventive Medicine, KBR Vector Control, and the 40th ECES Pest Management Shop work together in a concerted effort to protect over 10,000 Army, Air Force, Coalition and contract personnel from all the pests of the Iraqi desert.

This team shares information, conducts joint surveys, identifies pests and designs control methods all in an effort to protect the personnel Ali Base.

If you have a pest problem and need assistance please contact the ECES Customer Service at 445-2237.



The rat snake pictured above is better known as a sand racer or glossy bellied racer in this country.



Camel spiders are the the most prevelent pest here at Ali Base. Fortunatly the myth of camel spiders reaching lenghs of 12 inches is just that, a myth.

EOD

Continued from Page 1

1.) Munitions may detonate by accidental disturbance from personnel, vehicles or equipment. For example, submunitions are designed to sit and wait for something or someone to disturb it. Once it is disturbed it detonates causing death and destruction.

2.) Iraqi munitions litter the country and are currently being used by insurgents to make roadside IEDs. These large diameter munitions are heavy steel with high-explosive fillers and when used cause deadly blast overpressure and fragmentation.

3.) Insurgents are also using Iraqi munitions as designed. For example, insurgents use mortars and rockets to fire at a base from a distance making it more difficult to stop or detect.

“Recovering and destroying these munitions on and around Ali Base is our primary focus here, said Capt. Sanchez. “When teams deploy to forward operating bases, their primary focus is rendering safe and destroying IEDs”.

Explosive Ordnance Disposal teams travel in combat patrols because attacks and ambushes are probable threats.

“We have had teams shot at while responding to actual IEDs, and vehicle-borne IEDs detonating while attempting render safe procedures,” said Capt. Sanchez.

The EOD experts employ four different robot platforms here to help them perform their mission, the RONS, Mk-6, Mini-Andros and ARTS.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Ryan Groves

Senior Airman Billy White, 407th ECES Explosive Ordnance Disposal Flight, operates a robot during a IED operation at FOB McHenry.

“Our primary robot used on base is a Remote Operating Neutralization System (RONS), and it costs around \$300K with all its accessories,” said Capt. Sanchez. “The robot allows us to conduct remote actions prior to sending an EOD technician ‘down range’ on the suspect item.”

Since their rotation began here in Jan., the EOD experts have destroyed a total of 72,758 unexploded ordnance items and small arms; weighing in excess of 257,718 pounds.

Of this, 19,455 are high explosive munitions ranging from 37mm to 240mm in diameter, with the remaining 53,303 being small arms, below 20mm.

“It is an extremely dangerous job, due to the unpredictability of explosives, muni-

tions’ condition and the IED threat,” said Capt. Sanchez. “However, a difficult technical school along with a continuous training program and over 2,000 technical orders help mitigate the job’s inherent dangers.

All Air Force EOD experts who deploy to Iraq or Afghanistan are required to attend a three week U.S. Army Contingency Skills Training Course at Ft. Carson, CO. The course covered convoy tactics/procedures to include a live fire exercise, Army weapons qualification; combat life saver certification and crew serve weapons certification. EOD specific training was also incorporated in the course, this portion covered IEDs used specifically in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The 407th EOD’s primary mission is on Ali Base. However, they have actively supported U.S. Army and MNC-I forces throughout Iraq, with Col. Diggett, 407th AEG commander’s approval.

“I have sent teams to Camp Bucca, CSG Scania, Balad and three Army forward operating bases: McHenry (near Kirkuk), Marez (Mosul), Falcon (Baghdad) totaling 286 man-days,” said Capt. Sanchez.

These EOD teams have defeated IEDs, destroyed weapon caches and cleared areas for future construction at all these locations. “We have also conducted 25 joint operations with the Italian Army EOD unit disposing of captured enemy ammunitions located at CEA-14 site near base, and removed unsecured munitions near MSR Tampa,” said Capt. Sanchez.



Members of the EOD Team and gather around the more than 900 ordnance items they recovered during a joint operation with the 407th ESFS.

Last base cleanup for AEF 3/4 is huge success

By Master Sgt. Terry Nelson

407th AEG Public Affairs

About 100 people met at the Hot Spot here Apr. 21, for AEF 3/4s final base and Bedrock clean up.

There was a tremendous amount of garbage collected as Bedrock residents were asked to gather garbage that had accumulated in their tent and pile it up at the smoke pits. This, combined with the trash picked up from the days walk through of Bedrock, resulted in the largest garbage collection of the rotation.

"We had great support from all the squadrons," said Senior Master Sgt. Maurice Stansbury, 407th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron superintendent. "In total, we loaded seven dump truck full of trash, totalling 70 tons or 120 cubic yards."

The Company Grade Officers Association awarded prizes for the largest and most unusual piece of trash. They also hid an camo egg, and the finder of the egg received a prize. The camo egg hunt winner was Senior Airman Dwight Poe, 407th ECES, he received a \$25 AAFES Gift Certificate. The largest piece of trash was found by Airman 1st Class Justin Horn, 407th ECES, he received a \$15 AAFES Gift Certificate. And the most unique piece of trash was picked up by Staff Sgt. Lindsey Sargent, 407th ECS, she received a \$10 AAFES Gift Certificate.

"We had an excellent group-wide turnout for this months Bedrock cleanup. We wanted to make sure we left Ali Base in better shape than we found it," said Chief Master Sgt. James Lawrence, 407th AEG superintendent. "Clearly, AEF 3 & 4 has taken great pride in its living areas. I want to thank the Company Grade Officers Association & the Top Three Enlisted Council for their leadership and volunteer spirit.

Members of the Focus 56 & First Four were also well represented. And, as always, none of this would have happened without the outstanding support of the Civil Engineers."

(Middle Left) Senior Airman Blake Varnell, 407th ECES, hauls some of the 70 tons of trash that was picked up Apr. 21, to a waiting dump truck.

(Middle Right) Trash from Bedrock resident's tents awaits pickup Apr. 21. The majority of trash picked up during the cleanup was from the tents.



Photos by Master Sgt. Terry Nelson

From left to right; Chief Master Sgt. Steve Cron, 407th ECS, Capt. Brian Lewis, 777th EAS, and Senior Master Sgt. Whitney Jackson, 407th AEG, pick up trash Apr. 21, trash that had accumulated in a grate at the entrance to a shower/restroom.



Senior Airman Dwight Poe, 407th ECES, is presented an \$25 AAFES Gift Certificate Apr. 21, from 1st. Lt. Tyler Lake, 407th AEG. Airman Poe found the hidden camo egg while cleaning up Bedrock and was awarded the certificate for his efforts. The AAFES Gift Certificates were provided by the Company Grade officer's Association.

407th AEG Warrior of the Week SrA Milford Scroggins



Unit: 777th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron

Home unit: 412th Equipment Maintenance Sq., Edwards AFB, CA.

Why other warriors say he's a warrior: Senior Airman Scroggins is an excellent worker. He completed safety inspection on four aircraft, looking for center wing box cracks. He provided 108 hours of classroom/on-the-job training to Iraqi NDI students. Senior Airman Scroggins also performed a unit HazMat self-inspection with zero discrepancies.

Hobbies: Weightlifting and playing the guitar

What is your most memorable Air Force experience: My most memorable moment would be this AEF rotation. Nothing beats seeing the look on the faces of the Iraqi Airmen while listening to them talk about freedom.

Identify This



KNOW WHAT THIS IS? Each week, the "Tallil Times" staff takes a photo from around Ali Base. If you can identify the object or item, shoot us an e-mail at: tallil.times@tlab.aorcentaf.af.mil. with "Identify This" in the subject block. The winner gets their name printed in the Tallil Times. Congratulations to Staff Sgt. Jaysa Davis who was the first to correctly identify the photo in last week's Tallil Times of a "baby wipe".

From the Chapel

Parachute Packing

Charles Plumb was a U.S. Navy jet pilot in Vietnam. After 75 combat missions, his plane was destroyed by a surface-to-air missile. Plumb ejected and parachuted into enemy hands. He was captured and spent six years in a communist Vietnamese prison. He survived the ordeal and now lectures on lessons learned from that experience!

One day, when Plumb and his wife were sitting in a restaurant, a man at another table came up and said, "You're Plumb! You flew jet fighters in Vietnam from the aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk. You were shot down!"

"How in the world did you know that?" asked Plumb. "I packed your parachute," the man replied. Plumb gasped in surprise and gratitude. The man pumped his hand and said, "I guess it worked !" Plumb assured him, "It sure did. If your chute hadn't worked, I wouldn't be here today."

Plumb couldn't sleep that night, thinking about that man. Plumb says, "I kept wondering what he had looked like in a Navy uniform: a white hat; a bib in the back; and bell-bottom trousers. I wonder how many times I might have seen him and not even said 'Good morning, how are you?' or anything

because, you see, I was a fighter pilot and he was just a sailor."

Plumb thought of the many hours the sailor had spent at a long wooden table in the bowels of the ship, carefully weaving the shrouds and folding the silks of each chute, holding in his hands each time the fate of someone he didn't know.

Now, Plumb asks his audience, "Who's packing your parachute?"

Everyone has someone who provides what they need to make it through the day. He also points out that he needed many kinds of parachutes when his plane was shot down over enemy territory - he needed his physical parachute, his mental parachute, his emotional parachute, and his spiritual parachute. He called on all these supports before reaching safety.

Sometimes in the daily challenges that life gives us, we miss what is really important. We may fail to say hello, please, or thank you, congratulate someone on something wonderful that has happened to them, give a compliment, or just do something nice for no reason.

As you go through this week, this month, this year, recognize people who pack your parachutes

**Mother's Day is May 8th,
so don't forget about mom!**

OUT AND ABOUT



Worship Services

Worship is at the 407th Air Expeditionary Group Oasis of Peace Chapel, unless otherwise noted. The chapel is open 24 hours a day for prayer and reflection. For details on worship opportunities, call 445-2006.

Sunday

0730 Catholic Confession
@ Chapel/Chaplain's
Office

0800 Roman Catholic
Mass @ Chapel

0930 Traditional Protestant
Service @ Chapel

1000 LDS Service @
Army Religious Activity
Center

1030 Roman Catholic
Mass @ Camp Cedar

1230 Gospel Service @
Big Top

1800 Contemporary Praise
Team Rehearsal @ Chapel

1900 Contemporary
Worship Service @ Chapel

Monday

1800 Weekday Mass @
Chapel

1830 Gospel Service
Prayer Hour @ Conf.
Room

1930 Gospel Choir
Rehearsal @ Big Top

Tuesday

0600 Weekday Mass @
Chapel

1900 RCIA @ Conf.
Room

Wednesday

1700 Catholic Choir
Rehearsal @ Chapel

1800 Weekday Mass @
Chapel

2000 40 Days of Purpose
Bible Study @ Chapel
Annex

Thursday

0600 Weekday Mass @
Chapel

1830 Catholic Choir
Rehearsal @ Chapel

1900 LDS Study @ Army
Religious Activity Center

1945 Gospel Service Bible
Study @ Chapel

Friday

1800 Weekday Mass @
Chapel

1830 Gospel Choir
Rehearsal @ Chapel

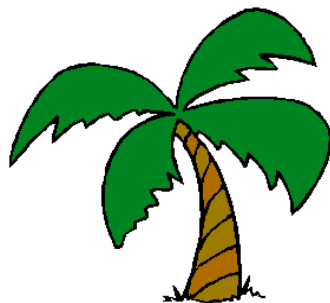
1145 Islamic Prayer @
Army Religious Activity
Center

Saturday

1730 Catholic Confession
@ Chapel/Chaplain's
Office

1800 Catholic Vigil Mass
@ Chapel

1900 Contemporary Praise
Team Rehearsal @ Chapel



Today

Noon, Meet The Fockers
8 p.m., Meet The Fockers
Midnight, Meet The Fockers

Saturday

Noon, Boogeyman
8 p.m., Boogeyman
Midnight, Boogeyman

Sunday

Noon, Spanglish
8 p.m., Spanglish
Midnight, Spanglish

Monday

Noon, Hide and Seek
8 p.m., Hide and Seek
Midnight, Hide and Seek

Tuesday

Noon, White Noise
8 p.m., White Noise
Midnight, White Noise

Wednesday

Noon, Viewers Choice
8 p.m., Viewers Choice
Midnight, Viewers Choice

Thursday

Noon, Meet The Fockers
8 p.m., Meet The Fockers
Midnight, Meet The Fockers

May. 6th

Noon, Boogeyman
8 p.m., Boogeyman
Midnight, Boogeyman

Combat Cons and the Ali/Boston Marathon

Editorial By Master Sgt. William McKeon

407th ECONS

“Every morning in Africa, a gazelle wakes up. It knows it must outrun the fastest lion or it will be killed. Every morning in Africa, a lion wakes up. It knows it must run faster than the slowest gazelle, or it will starve. It doesn’t matter whether you’re a lion or gazelle - when the sun comes up, you’d better be running.”

At 6:30 a.m. on the Apr. 18, at Ali Base, Iraq, a total of 350 competitors were doing just that. The starting line strained with runners waiting to begin a 26.22 mile race. The majority of the participants were comprised of 69 four-person teams who divided the marathon distance into more manageable six or seven mile legs.

Sixty five individual runners pitted themselves against the long distance throughout Ali Base to include zooming by the Ziggurat, and sultry desert weather for a gain that can only be felt by the individual.

Among the 65 competitors that dared to attempt the entire 26.2 miles, five were runners from the 407th Combat Contracting team. With only six assigned to the squadron, having five runners attempt the distance is unusual.

I was the only prior marathoner, I had previously finished five marathons, numerous five and 10Ks, and a triathlon. Through my guidance and experience, the group was motivated to run their first marathon.

With only six weeks to prepare a body to attempt the four+ hours of running, it took a solid mile-building plan.

The secret to the 26.2 mile run is the solid belief that you can finish, and a smart plan, I told my co-workers. And Capt. “Cappuccino” Phillips, Tech. Sgt.’s “Big Guns” Jacobs and “Trainwreck” Crespo along with Staff Sgt. “Action” Pierre-Louis all had a never-quit attitude.

Everyone had a positive attitude from the beginning. Once I told them that if I can do



Courtesy photos

Members of the 407th Combat Contracting Team gather for a photo. Team members are, from right to left; Tech. Sgt. Lou Crespo, Staff Sgt. Jennifer Pierre-Louis, Tech. Sgt. Gerald Jacobs, Capt. Sharon Phillips and Master Sgt. William McKeon.

it, anyone can; they were sold.

Next was a solid plan. Having run the entire marathon distance, we decided the “run/walk plan” would be best. The team ran between three-six miles every other day and on the weekends, the group spent “quality time” on long runs together. They ran a 10 minute mile pace for five minutes and did a brisk walk for one minute during the long distance runs, the longest being 17 miles.



Here I am, just another walk in the park.

Everyone was nervous but confident for the big race.

On the morning of the 18th, the sun was up and the 407 ECONS team was running proudly with the American flags secure on their backs. The weather stayed reasonably warm and clear and all the runners deserve a huge salute. The Combat CONS did exceptionally well; Capt. Phillips finished 4th in the women’s category and I managed a 5th place finish overall. Tech. Sgt. Jacobs and Staff Sgt. Pierre-Louis finished just as they planned, less than 5 hours; 4:59:51. Tech. Sgt. Crespo gutted out a respectable 5:28. The 407th AEG and the Contracting career field can be extremely proud of these distance runners. They have proven it is not a matter of “I can or I can’t”, but simply, “I will.”



Tech. Sgt. Lou Crespo, Staff Sgt. Jennifer Pierre-Louis and Tech. Sgt. Gerald Jacobs, are seen here running together during the marathon.

Ali Marathon results

Results from the Ali Marathon are as follows:

First Place, Male: U.S. Army Capt. Luis Soto, 3:03.20

First Place, Female: U.S. Army Capt. Elizabeth North, 3:53.35

Air Force's Top Male Finishers: Tech. Sgt. Ken Riley, 3:31.00, third place overall; Master Sgt. William McKeon, 3:41.17, fifth overall

Air Force's Top Female Finishers: Capt. Sharon Phillips, 4:38.05, fourth place; Staff Sgt. Jennifer Pierre-Louise, 4:59.55, eighth place

Air Force's Top Team: 407th ELRS' Purple Headed Yogurt Slingers, 3:16.00, fifth overall

The Outdoor Life Network covered the event, broadcasting coverage of the event during the running of the 109th Boston Marathon. The Boston Athletic Association furnished medals for all competitors, however there were not enough medals for everyone, so the BAA is sending more. They also furnished t-shirts and sports bottles.



Tech. Sgt. Ken Riley, 777th EAS, was the top Air Force finisher in the Ali Marathon, taking third place overall with a time of 3 hours, 31 minutes.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Darcie Ibadapo

U.S. Army Capt. Rodney Freeman, Ali Marathon coordinator, gets ready to officially start the Ali Marathon Apr. 18.



Competitors cross the finish line of the Ali Marathon here Apr. 18.



Capt. Sharon Phillips, 407th ECS, was the top female Air Force runner, she finished fourth with a time of 4 hours, 38 minutes.



(Maj.) Father Joe Deichert, 407th AEG and 1st Lt. Claudia Denton, 407th ECS, compete in the Ali Marathon here Apr. 18.